



**House Environmental and Natural Resource Protection Committee**

***Meeting Agenda***

Monday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025

11:00am – 12:00pm

205 Ryan Office Building

Call to Order

Roll Call

[HB 364 ; PN 320 \(Vitali\)](#) – Restores the authority of the Department of Environmental Protection and Environmental Quality Board to change bonding amounts for conventional oil and gas wells.

[HR 218 ; PN 1554 \(Haddock\)](#) – Directs the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study on compensation and benefits packages for game wardens, waterways conservation officers and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources rangers.

[SB 109 ; PN 62 \(Laughlin\)](#) – Reduces maximum license fee for groin structures to \$250.

Any other business

Adjournment



# Environmental & Natural Resource Protection Committee

State Representative Greg Vitali  
Democratic Chairman

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## MEMORANDUM

DATE: 6/16/2025  
TO: House Environmental and Natural Resource Protection Committee Members  
FROM: Representative Greg Vitali, Majority Chairman  
House Environmental and Natural Resource Protection Committee  
RE: Environmental and Natural Resource Protection Committee Voting Meeting –  
Monday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025

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The House Environmental and Natural Resource Protection Committee will hold a voting meeting on **Monday, June 23rd, 2025, at 11:00am in 205 Ryan Office Building.**

The purpose of this voting meeting will be to consider the following legislation and any other business that may come before the committee.

- [\*\*HB 364 ; PN 320 \(Vitali\)\*\*](#) – Restores the authority of the Department of Environmental Protection and Environmental Quality Board to change bonding amounts for conventional oil and gas wells.
- [\*\*HR 218 ; PN 1554 \(Haddock\)\*\*](#) – Directs the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study on compensation and benefits packages for game wardens, waterways conservation officers and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources rangers.
- [\*\*SB 109 ; PN 62 \(Laughlin\)\*\*](#) – Reduces maximum license fee for groin structures to \$250.

Please contact Hayley Shupe at 717-787-7647 or [hshupe@pahouse.net](mailto:hshupe@pahouse.net) with any questions. If you are unable to attend this meeting, please submit an Official Vote by Designation Form prior to the start of the meeting.

Thank you,

GV/hs

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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE BILL

No. 364 Session of  
2025

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INTRODUCED BY VITALI, SAMUELSON, BRENNAN, PIELLI, HOHENSTEIN,  
HILL-EVANS, CIRESI, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, FREEMAN AND STEELE,  
JANUARY 27, 2025

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCE  
PROTECTION, JANUARY 27, 2025

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AN ACT

1 Amending Title 58 (Oil and Gas) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated  
2 Statutes, in development, further providing for bonding.

3 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
4 hereby enacts as follows:

5 Section 1. Section 3225(a)(1) introductory paragraph and  
6 (iii) and (2) of Title 58 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated  
7 Statutes are amended to read:

8 § 3225. Bonding.

9 (a) General rule.--The following shall apply:

10 (1) Except as provided in subsection (d), upon filing an  
11 application for a well permit and before continuing to  
12 operate an oil or gas well, the owner or operator of the well  
13 shall file with the department a bond covering the well and  
14 well site on a form to be prescribed and furnished by the  
15 department. A bond filed with an application for a well  
16 permit shall be payable to the Commonwealth and conditioned  
17 upon the operator's faithful performance of all drilling,

1 water supply replacement, restoration and plugging  
2 requirements of this chapter. A bond for a well in existence  
3 on April 18, 1985, shall be payable to the Commonwealth and  
4 conditioned upon the operator's faithful performance of all  
5 water supply replacement, restoration and plugging  
6 requirements of this chapter. The amount of the bond required  
7 shall be in the following amounts and [amounts under  
8 subparagraphs (i) and (ii)] may be adjusted by the  
9 Environmental Quality Board every two years to reflect the  
10 projected costs to the Commonwealth of plugging the well:

11 \* \* \*

12 (iii) For a well other than an unconventional well,  
13 \$2,500 per well. [For 10 years following the effective  
14 date of this subparagraph, the Environmental Quality  
15 Board and the department shall have no authority to  
16 adjust the amount under this subparagraph.]

17 (2) The following apply:

18 (i) Except as provided under subparagraph (ii), in  
19 lieu of individual bonds for each well, an owner or  
20 operator may file a blanket bond for the applicable  
21 amount under paragraph (1) (i) or (ii), on a form prepared  
22 by the department, covering all of its wells in this  
23 Commonwealth, as enumerated on the bond form.

24 (ii) As follows:

25 (A) An operator may file a blanket bond of  
26 \$25,000 for all of the operator's wells in this  
27 Commonwealth that are not unconventional wells.

28 [(B) For every new well that is not an  
29 unconventional well drilled after six months after  
30 the effective date of this subsection, the bond

1 amount for that operator shall increase by \$1,000.

2 (C) The total blanket bond for an operator's  
3 wells that are not unconventional wells shall not  
4 exceed \$100,000.

5 (D) The blanket bond increase of \$1,000 shall be  
6 waived by the department for a new well drilled under  
7 this subsection if the operator provides evidence to  
8 the department that the operator has plugged an  
9 orphan well at the operator's own expense for which  
10 the operator was not the responsible party within the  
11 previous 365 days that the operator has not yet  
12 received credit for under this subsection by the  
13 department.

14 (E) For 10 years following the effective date of  
15 this clause, the bond amounts for wells that are not  
16 unconventional wells may only be revised by the  
17 General Assembly. The Environmental Quality Board and  
18 the department shall have no authority to adjust bond  
19 amounts related to wells that are not unconventional  
20 wells during that time period.]

21 (F) The department shall conduct a study of its  
22 experience in implementing this section, report its  
23 findings to the Governor and the General Assembly and  
24 make recommendations for program amendments within 12  
25 months of the effective date of this clause. The  
26 report shall contain information relating to:

27 (I) the cost to the Commonwealth to plug  
28 orphan and improperly abandoned wells;

29 (II) evaluation of industry trends relating  
30 to compliance with plugging and reclamation

1 requirements under existing law;

2 (III) evaluation of the effectiveness of  
3 existing enforcement authority in avoiding  
4 improper abandonment, including civil penalty  
5 authority and forfeiting oil and gas well bonds;

6 (IV) the system for reviewing operators'  
7 requests for regulatory inactive status approval  
8 and permit transfers and what impact approving  
9 those actions under current requirements have on  
10 future improper abandonment of active wells;

11 (V) the number of identified orphan and  
12 improperly abandoned wells eligible for plugging;

13 (VI) any recommendation on effective  
14 alternative financial assurance mechanisms,  
15 including, but not limited to, increased bond  
16 amounts for conventional oil and gas wells; and

17 (VII) the potential applicability of the  
18 mechanisms to oil and gas wells drilled prior to  
19 April 18, 1985.

20 \* \* \*

21 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.

# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

## DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE BILL ANALYSIS

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<b>Bill No:</b>	HB0364 PN0320	<b>Prepared By:</b>	Andrew McMenamin (717) 783-4043,6941
<b>Committee:</b>	Environmental & Natural Resource Protection	<b>Executive Director:</b>	Evan Franzese
<b>Sponsor:</b>	Vitali, Greg		
<b>Date:</b>	2/3/2025		

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### **A. Brief Concept**

Restores the authority of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Environmental Quality Board (EQB) to change bonding amounts for conventional oil and gas wells.

### **C. Analysis of the Bill**

HB 364 amends Section 3225 (Bonding) of Title 58 (Oil & Gas) to restore the authority of the DEP and the EQB to change bonding amounts for conventional oil and gas wells.

#### **Bonding Amounts**

Restores bonding amounts to the status quo prior to Act 96 of 2022. Bonding amounts for conventional wells would be \$2,500 per well, with a blanket bond of \$25,000 for all of the operator's conventional wells in Pennsylvania.

#### **Study**

Requires DEP to conduct a study on oil and gas well bonding, including recommendations and a report within 12 months of the effective date, looking at the following:

- the cost to the Commonwealth to plug orphan and improperly abandoned wells,
- evaluation of industry trends relating to compliance with plugging requirements,
- evaluation of the effectiveness of existing enforcement authority,
- the system for reviewing operator requests for regulatory inactive status and permit transfers,
- impact of approving inactive status requests and permit transfers on future abandoned wells,
- the number of identified orphan and improperly abandoned wells eligible for plugging,
- any recommendations on effective alternative financial assurance mechanisms, including potentially increasing bonding amounts, and
- the potential applicability of such mechanisms to wells drilled prior to April 18, 1985.

#### **Effective Date:**

60 days

### **G. Relevant Existing Laws**

#### **Bonding Amounts**

Under Act 96, the DEP and the EQB have no authority to adjust bonding amounts on conventional wells (and other wells that are not unconventional) until 2032. Only the General Assembly would be able to make adjustments during this period.

Currently, bonding amounts for conventional oil and gas wells are set at \$2,500 per well, with a \$25,000 blanket bond. The bond amount for an operator increases by \$1,000 for every

additional well drilled, with a cap of \$100,000. Operators can avoid paying the additional \$1,000 per well if they plug an orphan well at their own expense.

Prior to the passage of Act 96, bonding amounts for conventional oil and gas wells were provided for under Act 87 of 2012 in section 1606-E of the Fiscal Code, set at \$2,500 per well with a \$25,000 blanket bond. This section was repealed by Act 96.

The \$2,500 per well bond with a \$25,000 blanket bond was first established by the Oil & Gas Act of 1984, and briefly increased after the passage of Act 13 of 2012. Between the passage of Act 13 and Act 87, there was no distinction between bonding amounts for conventional and unconventional wells.

## **Pre-1985 Wells**

Section 1934-A of the Administrative Code (Act 175 of 1929) states that no bond or bond substitute is needed for any well drilled prior to April 18, 1985, and would not be affected by this legislation.

## **Definitions**

Title 58 contains the following definitions:

*Abandoned well* is defined to mean a well that meets the following conditions, unless it has been granted inactive status:

- has not been used to produce, extract or inject any gas, petroleum or other liquid within the preceding 12 months;
- equipment necessary for production, extraction or injection has been removed; or
- the well is considered dry and not equipped for production within 60 days after drilling, re-drilling or deepening.

*Orphaned well* is defined to mean "a well abandoned prior to April 18, 1985, that has not been affected or operated by the present owner or operator and from which the present owner, operator or lessee has received no economic benefit other than as a landowner or recipient of a royalty interest from the well."

## **E. Prior Session (Previous Bill Numbers & House/Senate Votes)**

HB 364 was previously introduced as HB 962 during the 2023-2024 Legislative Session. HB 962 was reported as amended from the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee **12-9** (party line vote) on May 23, 2023. The bill did not receive further consideration.

This document is a summary of proposed legislation and is prepared only as general information for use by the Democratic Members and Staff of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. The document does not represent the legislative intent of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and may not be utilized as such.



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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 218 Session of  
2025

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INTRODUCED BY HADDOCK, MADDEN, HILL-EVANS, GIRAL, SANCHEZ,  
PROBST, STEELE, NEILSON, BOROWSKI, O'MARA AND CEPEDA-FREYTIZ,  
APRIL 30, 2025

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCE  
PROTECTION, APRIL 30, 2025

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A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to  
2 conduct a study and issue a report on the compensation and  
3 benefits packages given to game wardens, waterways  
4 conservation officers and Department of Conservation and  
5 Natural Resources rangers.

6 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania's natural environment is a key source  
7 of recreation for the residents of this Commonwealth and  
8 attracts visitors from other states; and

9 WHEREAS, Within State government, the Pennsylvania Game  
10 Commission, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission and the  
11 Department of Conservation and Natural Resources each hire full-  
12 time officers tasked with the conservation of this environment  
13 and the species that live within it; and

14 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Game Commission hires game wardens  
15 to ensure compliance with State hunting laws and regulations and  
16 the protection of wildlife; and

17 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission hires  
18 waterways conservation officers to ensure compliance with State

1 fishing laws and regulations and the protection of marine life;  
2 and

3 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and  
4 Natural Resources hires rangers to ensure compliance with State  
5 laws and regulations relating to State parks and forests and to  
6 assist and educate visitors; and

7 WHEREAS, To serve in any of these positions, an individual  
8 must complete a structured law enforcement training program,  
9 including a physical fitness assessment, and must demonstrate  
10 proficiency in relevant State laws and regulations; and

11 WHEREAS, Despite being classified as law enforcement  
12 officers, conservation officers earn salaries and hourly wages  
13 significantly lower than other Pennsylvania law enforcement  
14 officers; and

15 WHEREAS, Under the current pay scales for a 40-hour workweek,  
16 game wardens have a starting annual salary of \$52,932, waterways  
17 conservation officers have a starting annual salary of \$48,196  
18 and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources rangers  
19 have a starting annual salary of \$45,859; and

20 WHEREAS, Comparatively, members of the Pennsylvania State  
21 Police currently have a starting annual salary of \$66,911; and

22 WHEREAS, Conservation officer positions have seen hiring  
23 shortages in recent years, with the Pennsylvania Game Commission  
24 and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission lowering  
25 qualification standards in response; and

26 WHEREAS, The lower salaries of conservation officers relative  
27 to other law enforcement positions in Pennsylvania and  
28 comparable positions in other states have contributed to  
29 staffing shortages; and

30 WHEREAS, It is in the interests of the Commonwealth to

1 evaluate the compensation of conservation officers as compared  
2 to conservation officers in other states and other State law  
3 enforcement positions to determine whether pay increases and  
4 other changes should be made; and

5 WHEREAS, The House of Representatives seeks to ensure that  
6 the agencies authorized to protect and conserve the wildlife and  
7 natural environment of this Commonwealth are properly equipped;  
8 therefore be it

9 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the  
10 Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study on  
11 the compensation and benefits packages given to game wardens,  
12 waterways conservation officers and Department of Conservation  
13 and Natural Resources rangers, including a comparison with  
14 similar positions in neighboring states and other Pennsylvania  
15 law enforcement positions; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the study contain the following information:

17 (1) The salaries of State game wardens and waterways  
18 conservation officers and Department of Conservation and  
19 Natural Resources rangers in comparison to similar positions  
20 in neighboring states and other Pennsylvania law enforcement  
21 positions.

22 (2) The scope of duties of State game wardens and  
23 waterways conservation officers and Department of  
24 Conservation and Natural Resources rangers in comparison to  
25 similar positions in neighboring states and other  
26 Pennsylvania law enforcement positions.

27 (3) The value and contents of the benefits packages  
28 given to State game wardens and waterways conservation  
29 officers and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources  
30 rangers in comparison to the benefits packages given to

1 similar positions in neighboring states and other  
2 Pennsylvania law enforcement positions.

3 (4) Policy recommendations for the House of  
4 Representatives relating to Pennsylvania conservation  
5 officers' compensation and benefits;

6 and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee  
8 submit a report of its findings and policy recommendations  
9 within one year of the adoption of this resolution to the  
10 following:

11 (1) The President pro tempore of the Senate.

12 (2) The Speaker of the House of Representatives.

13 (3) The Majority Leader of the Senate.

14 (4) The Majority Leader of the House of Representatives.

15 (5) The Minority Leader of the Senate.

16 (6) The Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.

17 (7) The chair and minority chair of the Game and  
18 Fisheries Committee of the Senate.

19 (8) The chair and minority chair of the Game and  
20 Fisheries Committee of the House of Representatives.

# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

## DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE BILL ANALYSIS

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<b>Bill No:</b>	HR0218 PN1554	<b>Prepared By:</b>	Andrew McMenamin (717) 783-4043,6941
<b>Committee:</b>	Environmental & Natural Resource Protection	<b>Executive Director:</b>	Evan Franzese
<b>Sponsor:</b>	Haddock, James		
<b>Date:</b>	5/13/2025		

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### **A. Brief Concept**

Directs the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study on the compensation and benefits packages given to conservation officers, game wardens, and DCNR rangers.

### **C. Analysis of the Bill**

HR 218 directs the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee (LBFC) to conduct a study on the compensation and benefits packages given to:

- PA Game Commission (PGC) game wardens,
- PA Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) waterways conservation officers, and
- Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) rangers.

### **Contents of the Study**

The study would compare the following between game wardens, waterways conservation officers, and DCNR rangers versus similar positions in neighboring states and other PA law enforcement positions:

- Salaries
- Scope of duties
- Value and contents of benefits packages
- Policy recommendations.

### **Findings Report**

Within 1 year, LBFC shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the following:

- The President pro tempore.
- The Speaker of the House.
- The Senate Majority Leader.
- The House Majority Leader.
- The Senate Minority Leader.
- The House Minority Leader.
- The chair and minority chair of the Senate Game and Fisheries Committee.
- The chair and minority chair of the House Game and Fisheries Committee.

### **Effective Date:**

Immediately

### **G. Relevant Existing Laws**

Salaries of Pennsylvania state agency, commission, and department employees are established by the Pennsylvania Executive Board.

## **Fish & Boat Commission**

A [collective bargaining agreement](#) was reached between PA Fish & Boat Commission and its officers for fiscal years 2024/2025, 2025/2026, 2026/2027, and 2027/2028.

Under this agreement all officers shall receive a pay increase of:

- 5 percent starting July 1, 2024,
- 2 percent starting July 1, 2025,
- 2.25 percent starting July 1, 2026, and
- 2 percent starting July 1, 2027.

## **Game Commission**

A [collective bargaining agreement](#) was reached between PA Game Commission and its officers for fiscal years 2024/2025, 2025/2026, 2026/2027, and 2027/2028.

Under this agreement, officers under the GO01 and GO02 pay schedules shall receive a 5 percent pay increase starting July 1, 2024. Additionally, the GO02A pay schedule shall be 9 percent above the GO01 pay schedule, the GO03 pay schedule shall be 9 percent above the GO02A pay schedule, and the GO04 pay schedule shall be 9 percent above the GO03 pay schedule. All officers shall receive the following pay increases:

- 2 percent starting July 1, 2025,
- 2.25 percent starting July 1, 2026, and
- 2 percent starting July 1, 2027.

## **E. Prior Session (Previous Bill Numbers & House/Senate Votes)**

HR 218 has not been introduced in previous sessions.

Last session, two bills passed the House that would have required full-time officers of the PA Game Commission and PA Fish & Boat Commission to be compensated using the same pay scale as officers of the PA State Police.

- HB 2583 (Dellosa, PGC) was reported as committed unanimously from the Fish & Game Committee and passed the full House **179-23**, but received no further consideration in the Senate.
- HB 2608 (Neilson, PFBC) was reported as committed unanimously from the Fish & Game Committee and passed the full House **179-23**, but received no further consideration in the Senate.

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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE BILL

No. 109 Session of  
2025

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INTRODUCED BY LAUGHLIN, JANUARY 22, 2025

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REFERRED TO ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY, JANUARY 22, 2025

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AN ACT

1 Amending the act of November 26, 1978 (P.L.1375, No.325),  
2 entitled "An act providing for the regulation and safety of  
3 dams and reservoirs, water obstructions and encroachments;  
4 consolidating and clarifying the programs of the Department  
5 of Environmental Resources and Navigation Commission for the  
6 Delaware River; establishing penalties and repealing certain  
7 acts," further providing for definitions and for projects  
8 affecting submerged lands of the Commonwealth.

9 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
10 hereby enacts as follows:

11 Section 1. Section 3 of the act of November 26, 1978  
12 (P.L.1375, No.325), known as the Dam Safety and Encroachments  
13 Act, is amended by adding a definition to read:

14 Section 3. Definitions.

15 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall  
16 have, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, the  
17 meanings given to them in this section:

18 \* \* \*

19 "Groin structure." A shore structure that may affect shore  
20 erosion, wave action or inundation.

21 \* \* \*

1 Section 2. Section 15 of the act is amended by adding a  
2 subsection to read:

3 Section 15. Projects affecting submerged lands of the  
4 Commonwealth.

5 \* \* \*

6 (f) The department may charge a license fee not to exceed  
7 \$250 for a person to construct, repair, replace, operate,  
8 maintain or remove a groin structure at the licensed premises.

9 Section 3. This act shall take effect in 60 days.



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

## DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE BILL ANALYSIS

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<b>Bill No:</b>	SB0109 PN0062	<b>Prepared By:</b>	Andrew McMenamin (717) 783-4043,6941
<b>Committee:</b>	Environmental & Natural Resource Protection	<b>Executive Director:</b>	Evan Franzese
<b>Sponsor:</b>	Laughlin, Daniel		
<b>Date:</b>	6/11/2025		

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### **A. Brief Concept**

Reduces maximum license fee for groin structures to \$250.

### **C. Analysis of the Bill**

SB 109 amends the Dam Safety and Encroachments Act (Act 325 of 1978) by allowing DEP to charge a license fee of \$250 for a person to construct, repair, replace, operate, maintain or remove a groin structure.

#### **Definitions**

*Groin Structure* is defined to mean "a shore structure that may affect shore erosion, wave action or inundation."

#### **Effective Date:**

60 days

### **G. Relevant Existing Laws**

Section 15 (Projects affecting submerged lands of the Commonwealth) of the Dam Safety and Encroachments Act (Act 325 of 1978) provides for the granting of easements, right-of-way, and licenses to occupy submerged lands of the Commonwealth.

Title 25, PA Code, Ch. 105.35, provides for charges for the use and occupation of submerged lands of this Commonwealth.

### **E. Prior Session (Previous Bill Numbers & House/Senate Votes)**

SB 109 was previously introduced as SB 382 during the 2023-2024 Legislative Session. SB 382 was reported as amended **9-2** from the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and passed the Senate **44-1**.

SB 382 was referred to the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, but received no further consideration.

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